State of Tennessee LWDA Assessment

Sprint 9 – Northern Middle

June 3, 2019-June 14, 2019



Table of contents

	Table of contents	Page
1	Executive summary	2
2	Assessment approach	4
3	Organizational alignment	6
	Vision and strategy	6
	Organizational structure	8
	Performance management	10
4	Governance and risk management	12
	Internal controls	12
5	Enablement	16
	Technology	16
	Skills and communications	18
6	Appendices	20
	Appendix A: RACI matrix	21
	Appendix B: Current and future NMTLWDA organizational structure	24
	Appendix C: Technology landscape	26



Executive summary



Summary of observations

Outlined below are the key and consistent themes arising from our interviews with stakeholders and review of documentation:

- Opportunity exists to improve planning, prioritization and accountability strategic outcomes by developing a road map detailing key initiatives and milestones.
- Opportunities exist to clarify roles, responsibilities, accountability and build awareness of key stakeholder roles.
- Although this area has had challenges due to the realignment, key stakeholders felt that they were able to maintain the level of quality in their services. There is an opportunity to further define expectations and improve the quality and value of Board reports.
- There is an opportunity for the LWDA to better align their understanding of the OSO function and to streamline the specific roles and responsibilities of OSOs across the state.
- NMTLWDB's competitive RFP process is in line with leading practices recommended to other areas.
- There is an opportunity to improve the level of detail in NMTLWDB's policies and procedures as it relates to monitoring activities. Under the current 501(c)(3) structure, the Board staff may lack sufficient resources to diligently perform monitoring.
- There are opportunities to further train endusers on the full capabilities of the VOS system at the LWDA.
- There are opportunities to enhance communication within the NMTLWDA.



Assessment approach



Our framework

EY assessed the organizational fitness and operational controls of the Northern Middle LWDA by using a holistic framework that focused on strategic elements of an organization.

Assessment methodology

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Gather and review information

 Collect documentation and review to gain preliminary understanding of the LWDA as a whole and the organization's operating model 2

Conduct interviews focusing on the strategic elements of an organization

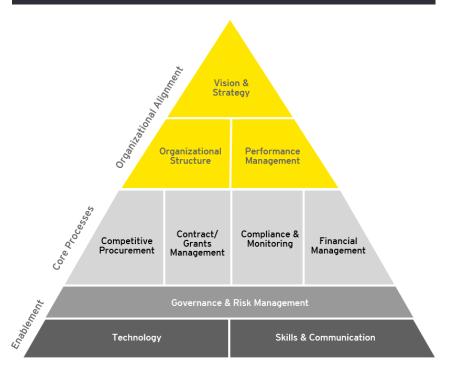
- Validate key roles and responsibilities
- Review internal control activities
- Develop RACI charts to define roles and responsibilities
- Review technology landscape, KPIs, organizational structure, skills and communication lines

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Document findings and recommendations of improvement

- Consolidate interview information
- Summarize observations
- Identify leading practices
- Develop and document improvement recommendations

Strategic elements of an organization





Organizational alignment
Vision and strategy



NMTLWDA strategy

Opportunity exists to improve planning, prioritization and accountability strategic outcomes by developing a roadmap detailing key initiatives and milestones.

Focus area	Key observation
Strategic vision	The Local Strategic Plan for the NMTLWDA defines key strategic focus areas and describes the One-Stop delivery system including the One-Stop Operator responsibilities, partner services referral process, and common performance measures and targets. The Local Plan was drafted by the interim Executive Director and a Board Staff member, who was formerly the Executive Director of Legacy Area 8. The Plan was reviewed by the LWDA Board, Board Chair CLEO, and Regional Director, who provided feedback to finalize the Local Plan.
	Both the interim Executive Director and Board Staff member noted that the plan was developed under a quick timeline and during a period of transition (merging Legacy Areas 8 and 9), and does not currently represent a strategic road map for the LWDA. According to the upcoming Executive Director (starts position on July 1, 2019), there is an opportunity to develop trackable and measurable strategic activities dashboard both for the LWDA and the Region in the near future.
	The Board Chair mentioned the Board had a planning session where they hired an outside consultant to generate strategic thought and set foundational strategic areas for the Board. They have used these strategic focus areas as a framework for Board meetings. In the future, the Board will actively track and assess them on an annual basis.
Roadmap to achieve strategic outcomes	Although there is a Local Plan that includes key strategic focus areas, it lacks a robust strategy road map to define key milestones needed to achieve strategic outcomes. The Board Chair and incoming Executive Director mentioned a plan to develop a dashboard to track strategic activities in the near future. Developing a road map tied to strategic outcomes will serve as a guide to key stakeholders, keep them aligned, committed and increase accountability.
Strategy enabling technology	Technology is primarily used for participant case management and as a tool to provide access to and build awareness of AJC services. The interim Executive Director stated having a physical presence, especially in rural counties, is critical for participants to access AJC services. The LWDA intends to utilize technology by investing more in computers and in mobile AJCs to increase accessibility to all participants. The Business Services division team also focuses on marketing and outreach of AJC services. There is an opportunity to coordinate, track and manage outreach communications through the use of a communication plan.

- The NMLWDB plans are in line with leading practices recommended to other areas. To further enable the achievement of strategic outcomes, the NMLWDB should:
 - ▶ Develop and document a road map that includes detailed plans for strategic goals and initiatives with key milestones and be revisited at a defined cadence (e.g., quarterly) with input from key stakeholders.
 - ▶ Implement plans to track progress against the strategic plan and provide updates and milestones during Board meetings.
 - Develop an outreach communication plan to verify that the NMTNWB is making the most efficient use of its marketing and outreach activities. This plan should include tracking success of the different strategies implemented.



Organizational alignment
Organizational structure



Roles and responsibilities

Opportunities exist to clarify roles, responsibilities, accountability and build awareness of key stakeholder roles.

Focus area	Key observation
LWDA Leadership	The CLEO understands his responsibilities and is engaged in the LWDA. His goal is to verify that the employer community and local participants make the best use of available funds and utilize the AJC system to promote overall economic development and community advancement. He has frequent communication with the interim Executive Director and Fiscal Agent and reviews fiscal reports on a monthly basis. He holds quarterly meetings with the other LEOs to provide them with AJC updates and to review and educate LEOs on their shared responsibility and accountability.
	The incoming Executive Director (starts on July 1, 2019) understands her role and responsibilities, and is considered a trusted partner to other leadership roles within the LWDA. She is the President of Workforce Essentials and has over 25 years of workforce development experience in the Northern Middle Tennessee area, which has allowed her to build strong working relationships with key area stakeholders. She has strong communication lines with key stakeholders and partners, including Board Chair, CLEO and Regional Director. To enable LWDA's strategic goals and ensure these have proper state support and sponsorship, her initial primary focus will be building a strong relationship with the state.
	The Board Chair is engaged and proactive in encouraging the Board to take ownership and accountability of establishing strategic direction. He mentioned the Board has been mostly involved in transitional activities related to realignment; however, once these conclude, the Board will function as a strategic advisory board. The Board Chair understands his role and believes the Board can benefit from more guidance on their specific responsibilities.
OSO and CSP	LWDA stakeholders were generally satisfied with OSO and CSP performance. Effective July 1, 2019, Mid-Cumberland Human Resource Agency (MCHRA) will become the OSO and CSP. Most staff in the current OSO and CSP roles will be hired by MCHRA; therefore, functional knowledge will be retained.
Regional Director	The interim Executive Director and Regional Director appear to have a strong working relationship and open communication. The Regional Director acts as a liaison between the Board and the State, is responsive, and provides guidance to the LWDA to verify compliance with state requirements.
Board Staff	The Board Staff is made up of 4 full-time positions whose salary is directly paid by the Northern Tennessee Workforce Board, Inc. (501(c)(3) organization), 1 full-time contractor to provide executive assistance, and 11 Nashville Career Advancement Center (NCAC) contracted staff to provide additional administrative support. The FTE count of the Board Staff is proposed to go from 16 to 10 on July 1, 2019 – when Workforce Essentials assumes the role of Board Staff and Fiscal Agent. This future Board Staff resource count is aligned with the responsibilities and volume of activities.

- ▶ Provide an orientation session for the Board that includes reviewing responsibilities, accountabilities and authority of role.
- Develop a roles and responsibilities guide, for key LWDA roles, that clearly defines responsibilities including reporting layers, management
 accountabilities and authority.



Organizational alignment Performance management



Performance management

Although this area has had challenges due to the realignment, key stakeholders felt that they were able to maintain the level of quality in their services. There is an opportunity to further define expectations and improve the quality and value of Board reports.

Focus area	Key observation
Realignment challenges	During realignment, The Northern Middle LWDA struggled to meet deadlines due to disagreement between the legacy areas 8 and 9. As a result, they were not able to competitively procure a new OSO or CSP as a single Board until recently (fall of 2018), Until the new OSO contract begins, the Northern Middle LWDA is in a unique situation in that they are currently operating with two different OSOs (with Workforce Essentials serving legacy Area 8 and Maximus serving legacy area 9). Despite the challenges, both OSOs expressed their ability to work well together and that they feel they have maintained a high level of performance.
OSO coordination	The two OSOs were inconsistent in their reporting (level of detail, format, etc.). This was due to the legacy areas varying in the level of input and feedback given to the OSO relative to reporting expectations and the differences in the two OSO contracts. Specifically, legacy area 9 provided minimal guidance to their OSO. As a result, the OSOs elected to combine their reporting. The combined OSO report provided to the Board includes metrics such as AJC visit numbers, reasons for AJC visits, barriers to success, and quantitative data for various programs (WIOA, Adult Education, Wagner-Peyser, TANF and Vocational Rehab).
Quality of performance reports	The performance reports shared with the Board are currently not providing the intended value in the Board's view. Based on interviews, this is due to the lack of guidance provided to the OSO on reporting expectations by the Board. ▶ During interviews, the Board Chair described the current performance reporting as "data overload." ▶ The data and metrics on the reports are not presented in a way that is meaningful to a Board. ▶ The data presented lacks context in connection with the overall goals and objectives. Enhanced reporting would equip the Board with useful information to drive better decision-making and optimizing the Board meeting time.

- ► There is an opportunity to optimize the Board's involvement by improving the quality of performance reports.
- Performance of the local workforce system should be measured by qualitative and quantitative metrics. Performance reports and dashboards should be redesigned to align with strategic goals and the data should be presented in a way that is appropriate for a Board-level audience.
- Reporting expectations should be defined by the Board and communicated to the OSO (or those preparing the reports).



Governance and risk management
Internal controls



OSO and CSP procurement

NMTLWDB's competitive RFP process is in line with leading practices recommended to other areas.

Observation

- The NMTLWDB has a documented procurement policy that is to be followed in their selection of providers, including OSO and CSP services.
- Some leading practices were displayed by the NMTLWDB in competitively procuring their OSO/CSP. For example:
 - An independent third party (Thomas P. Miller) was hired to perform procurement activities to eliminate any actual or perceived conflicts of interest in the OSO/CSP RFP selection process. The third party was responsible for developing the procurement documents (including the RFP), distributing the RFP, collecting the responses, reviewing the proposals, evaluating the proposals and making a recommendation to award.
 - The RFP was written with clear language describing the services for bid, as well as the required division between the two services (OSO and CSP). The RFP defined that an entity may bid on an individual component or both components, but the proposal would be evaluated and the contract would be awarded based on the individual components.
 - The evaluation committee, which was composed of third party (Thomas P. Miller) personnel, evaluated and scored the OSO and CSP services separately, even if an entity bid on both. The scorecards also demonstrated weighted scoring, with explanations for scoring within the range. There was adequate space for the evaluator to submit free text or explanation of their scoring. However, we determined that proposals were not made anonymized, meaning the evaluators were aware of the entity who submitted them. This creates the potential for an evaluator to adjust the score based on person preference.
- The third party's recommendation was presented to the Board's Executive Committee, plus the Regional Director. This committee reviewed the work performed by the third party and their recommendation.

Leading practice

- ► The RFP Evaluation Committee should be made up of individuals with various areas of knowledge (i.e., financial, procurement, career services). Based on subject-matter knowledge or functional area, it may be appropriate for each evaluation committee member to be assigned only a specific section of the proposal to review and score.
- Smaller organizations may choose to outsource the RFP process if they
 determine that their time will be more impactful spent elsewhere. Outsourcing
 the RFP process can reduce workload and operational costs.
- RFP evaluation criteria is clearly defined and documented, increasing consistency in scoring across judges and setting clear expectations for scorers.
- Scoring is blind (process by which evaluators rate the responses without specific knowledge of which entity is tied to which answer), reducing the risk of bias in the RFP process.
- Distinct weightings are used. This method allows each criterion to be measured on the same scale. Each criterion also has a weight by which the score is multiplied to give it a total weighted score. This makes scoring easy and confirms that the most important criteria are given greater consideration.
- Technology is incorporated into the RFP scoring process.

- NMTLWDB's competitive RFP process is in line with leading practices recommended to other areas.
- We recommend that RFP scoring is performed blind. RFP evaluation criteria should be specifically outlined in sufficient detail to enable consistent interpretation of responses.



Contract management

There is an opportunity for the LWDA to better align their understanding of the OSO function and to streamline the specific roles and responsibilities of OSOs across the state.

Observation

- Prior to merging into the new Northern Middle area, legacy area 8 and legacy area 9 held separate contracts for OSO and CSP providers. Currently, the two areas are still operating under these contracts but the new Board has collectively procured new OSO and CSP providers for the entire LWDA.
- It was noted during interviews that the individual contracts from legacy area 8 and legacy area 9 varied significantly in the level of detail and the specific responsibilities that were included. Based on interviews, the OSO roles and responsibilities may be interpreted differently in each LWDA.
- One entity (MCHRA) was selected to provide both the OSO and CSP services starting July 1, 2019. There are two separate contracts for the OSO and CSP services, which aligns with how the RFP was written. One of the current OSOs stated that she has already worked with MCHRA in regard to onboarding and a transition plan, including training to take place late June 2019.

Leading practice

- Service-level agreements (SLAs) are in place for all outsourcing contracts. SLAs include specific, measurable key performance indicators that can be clearly monitored and reported against. The SLA should describe the mechanism for escalating and resolving issues related to the delivery of services. The contract owner should be the main author of the SLA as they set the expectations for service delivery and quality that they require.
- ► There is a formal process in place to monitor contract performance and compliance to drive quality delivery and identify areas where the providers is not performing to expectations. Service provider performance is reported and reviewed collaboratively with the service provider.

- OSO contracts should clearly articulate roles and responsibilities. Develop and document the specific activities that the provider is responsible for, including the documentation required to demonstrate achievement of these activities. For example, a responsibility of the OSO is to verify the coordination of partner programs, one of the ways this could be demonstrated is providing a listing of all partners with a description of their services, meeting minutes from partner meetings, and a status report on any partner coordination in the making and/or successful relationships. Additionally, this documentation may also include the obligations for when expectations are not met.
- ► Consider utilizing a forum between OSOs in other LWDAs for sharing of leading practices and consistency purposes.



Formal monitoring program

There is an opportunity to improve the level of detail in NMTLWDB's policies and procedures as it relates to monitoring activities. Under the current 501(c)(3) structure, the Board staff may lack sufficient resources to diligently perform monitoring.

Observation

- ▶ The NMTLWDB has a documented Monitoring Policy. The monitoring activities documented in the policy are vague and do not define specific timelines, except for the annual requirement. Per the policy, the requirement for monitoring sub-recipients is to be conducted at a minimum of annually and at least 60 days before the expiration of the contract. The local monitoring policy implemented has not been customized to reflect the additional monitoring activities taking place.
- On a monthly basis, the performance management team reviews a sample of case files for quality assurance purposes. The feedback and findings are sent to the CSP to delegate among her AJC directors. The career specialists have 10 working days to make the requested corrections.
- The fiscal staff monitor invoices on a monthly basis, which includes confirming:
 - ► The correct documentation and evidence is included.
 - The request for reimbursement is valid.
 - Case note justification is included.
- ► The fiscal staff also performs ongoing monitoring of direct participant expenses (enrollments, eligibility, etc.) and vet the reporting metrics provided by the state.
- There is currently only one Board staff who conducts performance and fiscal monitoring, which is less than we have seen at other LWDAs. The amount of monitoring required, especially since re-alignment, may be too burdensome for one individual to complete effectively and efficiently.

Leading practice

- Monitoring policies are updated and customized to reflect the specific needs of the area. Policies include detail over specific monitoring activities (who is being monitored), monitoring criteria (what is being monitored), and the monitoring schedule (when does monitoring occur). Monitoring is performed in line with documented policy.
- Monitoring results are used to understand trends and identify root cause issues.
- Roles and responsibilities are clearly documented and understood among all employees. Monitoring activities are performed effectively and efficiently without redundancy.

- Update local monitoring policy to include specifics around monitoring performed by the area. Included in this policy should be escalation procedures detailing protocol for noncompliance with performance metrics.
- Monitoring policies should be documented in sufficient detail to include the who, what, when and how components of all different types of monitoring activities. This policy should be available to all related parties.



Enablement Technology



Technology

There are opportunities to further train endusers on the full capabilities of the VOS system at the LWDA.

Focus area	Key observation
Utilization of VOS	The OSOs expressed some challenges with VOS. They gave an example that two people could have the same criteria, but take different paths to produce a given report, and the reports would not agree. They understand how useful VOS can be, but they do not feel the trainings provided were appropriately focused.
	They expressed a lack of confidence in the data within the system (i.e., user entry error). The CSP also expressed that the system was not user-friendly, and additional training on leading practices in utilizing VOS as a case management system would be beneficial. The Regional Director reiterated the need for VOS training, as he felt the system was capable of much more than what it is currently being utilized for.
Centralized data entry into VOS	Workforce Essentials is using SalesForce as an additional case management system running parallel with VOS. This is due to perceived or real system limitations with VOS. This presents an additional risk of incomplete, inaccurate or untimely data within VOS. While the CSP is more comfortable with the SalesForce system, running dual systems in parallel is not a leading practice and often leads to inefficiencies in processing and increased cost.

- ▶ We recommend providing hands-on training for end users of VOS. We recommend identifying a "systems champion" (for VOS and Grants4TN) at the State level that can be used a source of information and training for the endusers. The Performance Management Director at the NMTLWDA, having worked with the system for many years, was referred to by many interviewees as a VOS expert.
- Review the VOS capabilities to determine whether the system has an "approval workflow" or similar functionality to allow for case managers to submit their participant enrollments and eligibility documentation to a centralized review team before submission.



EnablementSkills and communication



Skills and communication

There are opportunities to enhance communication within the NMTLWDA.

Focus area	Key observation
Training	The Board Chair welcomed Board training on Board management to include leading practices and activities to operate as a strategic advisory board.
Communication	Based on discussions with multiple stakeholders, during realignment, there were communication breakdowns associated with the NMTLWDA. These breakdowns were between both legacy areas 8 and 9, as well as with the local area and the central office. The upcoming Executive Director recognizes the suboptimal communication and has made it a priority to increase partnership with both the state and internally within the combined workforce area.
Firewall	Based on interviews, most stakeholders understand the "firewall" concept; however, sometimes when Workforce Essentials was both the Administrative entity and CSP, there was some confusion in understanding the level of segregation of duties when one entity is fulfilling more than one role. On July 1, 2019, MCHRA will be operating as OSO and CSP. Based on other Area assessments, MCHRA has adequate internal firewalls in place to avoid issues with segregation of duties. Overall, there is an opportunity to build awareness and refresh the firewall concept with key area stakeholders.

- ► Consider providing targeted training on board management to highlight leading practice activities to the Board.
- ► Consider refreshing the firewall concept, purpose, and allowed communications and activities for each key role.
 - ▶ Develop a communication that includes practical examples of allowed and disallowed communication topics for NMTLWDA to better understand the appearance of the conflict of interest provision.



Appendices



Appendix A: RACI matrix

Activity	Sub-activity	TDLWD/Central Office	Regional Director	CLEO/LEOs	LWDB	Fiscal Agent	Staff to the Board	Executive Director	080	Career Service Provider
	Define procurement policies	I	I	А	A/C	R/A	R/A	R	I	1
Vendor due	Define procurement processes, tools and templates		1		A/C	R/A	R/A	R/A	I	1
diligence*	Perform sourcing risk management			С	А	R/A	R	R		
	Action procurement policy noncompliance			С	R	Α	R/A	R		
	Prepare and conduct market assessment	I	1		1		R			
	Develop RFP to include KPIs and targets		С		С		R			
	Review and approve RFP	I	1	A/C	R/A	A/C	R	R		
Vendor	Distribute RFP		I		1		Α	R		
selection*	Prepare and conduct sourcing and bid event		1	1	С	С	А	R		
	Conduct sourcing evaluations		I		A/C	С	R/A	R		
	Select vendor	I	C/I	R	R	Α	Α	R		

R - Responsible, A - Accountable, C - Consulted, I - Informed



^{*}Refers to competitive RFP process for OSO and CSP

Appendix A: RACI matrix

Activity	Sub-activity	TDLWD/Central Office	Regional Director	CLEO/LEOs	LWDB	Fiscal Agent	Staff to the Board	Executive Director	080	Career Service Provider	Legal
Contract and	Contract creation and authorization	I	C/I	A/C	C/I	C/I	Α	RI			
grant management*	Contract execution		1	I	А	Α	Α	R			
management	Contract monitoring		- 1		А	R/A	R/A	R			
	Contract compliance		- 1		Α	Α	R/A	R			
Operational compliance and	Determine operational key performance indicators (KPIs)	С	C/I	C/I	R/A	А	R/A	R			
monitoring	Monitor and track performance against operational KPIs		1	С	С	R/A	R/A	R			
	Execute performance reviews		- 1		I	Α	Α	R			
	Report scorecards and performance results		- 1	1	Α	Α	Α	R	Α		
Regulatory compliance and	Develop Northern Middle LWDA Strategic Plan	C/I	C/I	С	С	С	R/A	R/A	С	С	
monitoring	Communicate regulatory requirements and policy changes	I	1	А	R/A	А	А	R	I	I	С
	Monitor and track performance against negotiated performance measures		1	А	R/A	А	А	R/A	А	А	
	Monitor and track performance against fiscal requirements		1	R/A	А	R/A	А	R			
	Execute performance reviews		C/I	C/I	Α	Α	Α	R			
	Report scorecards and performance results	I	C/I	R	R/A	R/A	R/A	R	Α	Α	
	Identify and correct noncompliance	C/I	С	С	Α	R/A	R/A	R	С	С	

^{*}Refers to OSO and CSP Contracts

R - Responsible, A - Accountable, C - Consulted, I - Informed



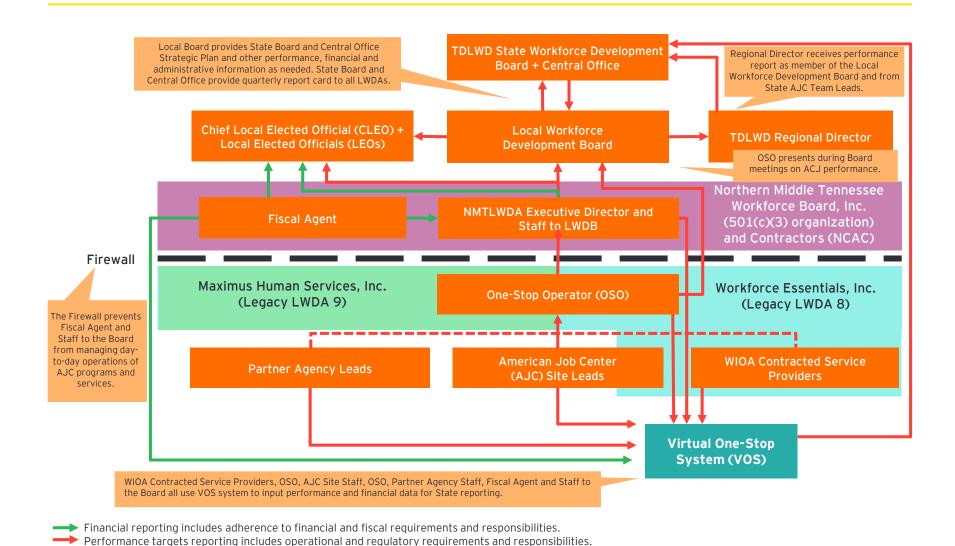
Appendix A: RACI matrix

Activity	Sub-activity	TDLWD/Central Office	Regional Director	CLEO/LEOs	LWDB	Fiscal Agent	Staff to the Board	Executive Director	080	Career Service Provider	Other Partners
Financial	Develop Northern Middle LWDA Budget	I	Α	A/C	R/A	R	Α	R	I	I	С
management	Approve Northern Middle LWDA Budget		Α	R	R	R	Α	R			
	Develop IFA	I	С		С	Α	Α	R	R		Α
	Approve IFA		Α	А	Α	Α	Α	R	R	R	R
	Prepare expenditure reports	I	I		I	R/A	Α	R			
	Review and approve expenditure reports	A/C									
	Review OSO and CSP invoices		- 1	- 1	- 1	R	Α	R	R/A	R/A	
	Pay OSO and CSP invoices and expenses		- 1	- 1	I	R	Α	R			
	Pay operating expenses	A/C	I	1	I	R	R/A	R			
	Submit reimbursement claims		I		I	R	Α	R			
	Monitor expenditures		1	1	1	R	R/A	R			

R - Responsible, A - Accountable, C - Consulted, I - Informed



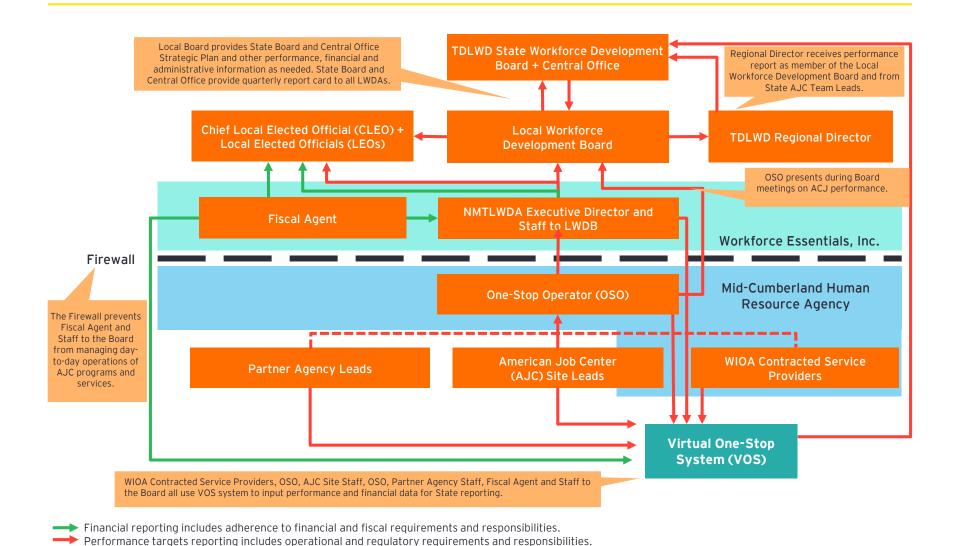
Appendix B: Current NMTLWDA organizational structure





•••• Updates to OSO as requested to include updates, quarterly highlights, needs and issues.

Appendix B: Future NMTLWDA organizational structure





•••• Updates to OSO as requested to include updates, quarterly highlights, needs and issues.

Appendix C: Technology landscape

				Key usage			
System	Purpose	Users	Financial Management	Performance and Contract Management	One-Stop Job Center Operations	AJC Operations	Risks and observations
Jobs4TN/VOS	Collect and maintains participant data. Serves as a repository for referrals and other metrics that is used by the state to develop performance reports. Used to record case notes on participant activities and document supporting evidence of eligibility and participant payments. Data is used to perform analysis for trends, performance monitoring and reporting.	AJC Staff, Board Staff, OSO, CSP and participants		X	X		During interviews, key stakeholders described the system as not all encompassing of the data they want it to retain and report on. The reporting capabilities of the system make gathering and analyzing data an inefficient process.
Grants4TN	Used to maintain records of financial transactions. Used to submit monthly expense reports and status reports to the state.	Fiscal Agent	X				Data is entered into the accounting system and in Grants4TN and there is no communication between the two. This is a very timely process and also
QuickBooks	Accounting system used to keep accounting records.	Fiscal Agent	X				poses the risk of data integrity. Data between Jobs4TN, Grants4TN and QuickBooks must be manually reconciled as the systems do not interface.
SalesForce	Data (case) management system, which they have customized to track participants. Provides an avenue to vet VOS data.	CSP staff				X	Limited risks. System is used by CSP to track performance due to VOS limitations.
EMSI (Economic Modeling Systems International)	Internal report generating tool used for labor market analysis. It used to identify skills gaps and in-demand industries, in and effort to meet the LWDA's specific needs.	CSP staff				X	Limited risks, as it is only used to generate reports. But there is concern that funding for this system will not be approved in the near future.



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